

Convention and Tourism Advisory Committee
Tuesday, April 7, 2006 – Minutes

Members Present: Marlene Leister, Bette Timmel, Don Marrs, Ben Vidricksen, Dave Miller, Kathy Tolbert

Members Absent: Gerald Cook, Jennifer Sturges, Tricia Weems

Guests/Staff Present: Keith Rawlings – Salina Bicentennial Center; Mike Harmon – Best Western Mid America Inn; Sylvia Rice, Tiffany Benien, Jo Ann McClure, Andi Pahl – Chamber Staff

Minutes

The Minutes of the March 2006 meeting were reviewed.

Financial Statement

The February Financial Statement was reviewed.

Division Updates:

Sports Market

Tiffany reported on the following sports events:

- **2006 NJCAA – Salina JUCO Basketball Blast** – The Juco Blast was very successful. Tournament newcomers, the Monroe Tribunes of Rochester, NY, were the 2006 Champions. Wayne Owen of First Bank Kansas hosted the team. Attendance was 13,967, which was down 100 from last year; the Colby team's early finish likely contributed to that decrease. There were 147 recruiters attending and most stayed longer than usual. More than 400 attended the traditional team banquet on Monday night, featuring keynote speaker Laurie Koehn of the WNBA Washington Mystics, and former KSU Wildcat. The Sunday Tail Gate Party drew 1,000 people and contributed to a good crowd for the Sunday Championship, which was televised by College Sports Television. The Chamber has a contract with the NJCAA to host the Championship in Salina through 2009. Tiffany and Sylvia will be accompanying members of the basketball Task Force to the NJCAA Annual Meeting in Colorado Springs April 5-6. The Chamber will host a reception at the Phantom Canyon Brewery for 125 attendees. Keith Rawlings commented that the tournament was a tremendous event and everyone did a great job. Over 200 volunteers worked prior to and during the event.
- **KSHSAA 4A State Basketball** – Attendance was up by a couple of thousand, its highest since 2000, at the State 4A basketball tournament held March 8-11 at the Salina Bicentennial Center. Although the reason for the increase can not be identified, Lindsborg did play in the tournament, which might attribute to some of the increase. The Chamber provided a hospitality room at the Best Western Heart of America Inn for the officials. This service has been a tradition of the tournament. Not only do the 4A officials utilize the room, but also other officials traveling to different state sites find that Salina is a good stopping point. The Chamber also sponsored the on-site hospitality room at the tournament.
- **Upcoming Baseball** – Triple Crown Sports baseball will host for the first time in Salina three youth baseball tournaments this year. Games will be held May 5-6, June 2-3 and June 23-24. Tiffany will be working with Tim Kerbs this year as Ryan McKee has left Salina Parks & Recreation.
- **KSHSAA 4A State Baseball and Softball** – The State baseball and softball tournament will be held at Dean Evans Stadium and Bill Burke Park May 26-27 this year.
- **Sports Event Symposium** – Tiffany will attend the national Sports Event Symposium for sports event planners in Lexington, KY April 18-20 and give a report at the next meeting.

Convention Market

Jo Ann gave the following convention update:

- Jo Ann attended The Reunion Network trade show in Branson, MO March 22-25. It was our first time exploring military reunion planners. We co-oped a booth with Topeka but they were unable to attend. A lot of bids were requested and Jo Ann will be following up on those.
- Jo Ann attended the Affordable Meetings Expo in Chicago March 28-31. There were between 900 and 1,000 vendors including, hotels, resorts, CVBs and more. This show had many more small, mid-western communities than in the past, which gave us more competition. This is the second year Jo Ann represented the Meet Kansas coalition at the expo and she will be following up on leads.
- Jo Ann will be attending the KMCPI conference in Overland Park April 12-13.

Tourism Market

Sylvia gave the following tourism market update:

- Tour Kansas – KMMA, now known as Tour Kansas, has a familiarization (FAM) tour in place for April 24-28. The State Travel Office previously did most of the planning and preparing for these tours. Now Tour Kansas has this role. This FAM tour welcomes 13 tour operators from Kansas, Texas, Tennessee, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Missouri and California. The Kansas Marketplace was cancelled for this spring but may be rescheduled for the fall FAM tour in September. There are many who have expressed their interest in this fall tour, and we are hoping to keep the Marketplace in Salina.

Another Tour Kansas project is to put together a cookbook of recipes from well-known restaurants in each community as way to raise money to be able to participate in Kansas City. Salina businesses that will be asked to participate include Smoky Hill Vineyards & Winery, Martinelli's Little Italy, Smoky Hill Bison Company, Capers Café & Bakery and others.

- I-70 – The I-70 coalition meets here today for its regularly scheduled monthly meeting. Guests from KDOT will join the group to talk about the upcoming anniversary of the interstate system. They will be discussing ideas about how to best celebrate the event along I-70. A caravan is being planned to travel across the state and many communities along the interstate are interested in participating in the anniversary. The I-70 brochure is now being reprinted.
- Tourism Ads – The Chamber has three Salina ads now running in different publications. So far, we have had 760 ad responses and fulfillment pieces have been sent out. In May, an ad will go in the *Kansas City Star* and *Frommer's Budget Travel*. We are also doing a co-op ad with Hays and Hutchinson to be placed in the *National Geographic Traveler* highlighting Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure, Sternberg Museum and the new Salt Museum.
- Kansas Sampler Festival – The Kansas Sampler Festival will be held in Garden City May 6-7. Sylvia and Andi will be attending. This large outdoor trade show is held in a different location in Kansas every two years. Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure will not be attending this year due to conflicting schedules. Smoky Hill Vineyards will have a booth. This trade show is primarily for the leisure travel market with some group planners from banks, and other agencies.
- State Website – Staff has been working on updating the Salina part of the State's website. We have more than 100 entries listed so far. The new site will be easier to keep current and photos can also be uploaded.
- Other Items – Sylvia will be doing research on lodging statistics and compiling the information gathered to see how we compare to other cities. Sylvia reported that a Kansas delegation is being put together to attend a tourism summit in Washington, DC. She also announced that the Wild West coalition may be attending the Travel Media Showcase this year.

Sylvia announced that there will be a dedication and open house at Smoky Hill Vineyards & Winery on April 7 and the grand re-opening of the Smoky Hill Museum will be April 28-29. The Yesteryear Museum will hold By Gone Days on April 29 as well.

Mike Harmon reported that the Best Western Mid American Inn took the Directors Award for the second straight year in Colorado Springs last week. Remodeling continues on the 30-year-old hotel.

Ben Vidricksen said that Bill Kurtis enjoyed his trip to Salina. Bill was able to spend some time with Steve Fossett, who was here with the GlobalFlyer. Ben said Bill is planning to return to Salina to visit Rolling Hills.

Keith Rawlings gave an update on events coming to the Salina Bicentennial Center including the Shrine Circus, Women's Showcase basketball and the Cagerz season opener on April 29. He also praised the Chamber for their assistance in getting the State Wrestling matches back to Salina for an extended period of time. Keith said construction in Heritage Hall continues and is hoping for completion in two to three weeks.

Kathy Tolbert said they are gearing up for school groups scheduled this spring. The next traveling exhibit for the Earl Bane Gallery is "Married to Adventure: The Marvin & Osa Johnson Story," on display through July. Kathy announced that over 100 zoos across the country are now on their reciprocal list, giving a 50% discounted rate.

Next Meeting

The next Convention & Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting will be held May 2 at the Chamber.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming meetings, conventions and events were noted.

The meeting adjourned at 8:23am.